

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /050 W
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R 301615Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2976
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 4786

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: SO MO
SUBJECT: SOMALI DIPLOMAT GIVES INTERVIEW TO MOROCCAN MEDIA

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. LOCAL PRESS CARRIED TEXT OF INTERVIEW
BY OFFICIAL NEWS AGENCY MAGHREB ARAB PRESS (-0) WITH SOMALI
AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE, DATELINED PARIS AUGUST 27. AMBASSADOR
SAID MOHAMED SAMANTAR REVIEWED HISTORY OF CURRENT TERRITORIAL
CONFLICT FROM MOGADISCIO'S PERSPECTIVE, THEN PROCEEDED TO ATTACK
ETHIOPIA'S CURRENT "ALLIES," WHOM HE NOTABLY -- AND SOMEWHAT
GLEEFULLY -- IDENTIFIED AS ISRAEL AND LIBYA. SAMANTAR ALSO
NOTED THAT THE ALGERIAN PRESS WAS PRO-ETHIOPIAN AND ALLEGED
THAT ALGIERS WAS SUPPORTING AND EVEN ENCOURAGING LIBYA TO AID
ETHIOPIA. HE ASKED RHETORICALLY WHETHER ALGIERAN MONEY ALSO
WAS BEING PROVIDED THROUGH LIBYA. ALGERIA'S CURRENT ATTITUDE
WAS INFLUENCED BY THE FACT THAT WHAT WAS NOW ENGAGING SOMALIA
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WAS THE SAME PRINCIPLE WHICH HAD RECENTLY MOTIVATED MOROCCO IN
THE SAHARA.

2. AS TO THE SAHARA, SOMALIA VIEWED IT AS A PROBLEM BETWEEN
ALGERIA AND MOROCCO; THE "SAHARAN FIGHTERS" WERE ALGIERAN
BACK MERCENAIRES. SOMALIA HAD TRIED TO FIND GROUND FOR AGREE-
MENT BETWEEN THE TWO -- BUT HAD FOUND ALGERIA OBSTRUCTIONIST

AND INTRACTABLE.

3. SAMANTAR CONCLUDED BY PRAISING MOROCCO'S "PRECIOUS" AID TO THE WSLF, MORAL ASSISTANCE THAT WOULD SOON BE SUPPORTED MILITARILY. THE TWO COUNTRIES' GOOD BILATERAL RELATIONS WOULD BE FURTHER STRENGTHENED BY THE UPCOMING VISIT OF SOMALI VP ALI ABOKAR. END UNCLASSIFIED.

4. SAMANTAR'S COMMENTS STRIKE US AS ODDLY TIMED, COMING ON THE EVE OF A VISIT BY ABOKAR TO ALGIERS. PERHAPS THE GOM PRESS TIMED THE RELEASE OF THE UNDATED INTERVIEW WITH THAT IN MIND. ABOKAR ARRIVED IN RABAT AUGUST 29 CARRYING A MESSAGE FROM SOMALIA'S PRESIDENT TO KING HASSAN.

5. WE ARE UNABLE TO CORROBORATE RUMORS OF MOROCCAN MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO SOMALIA, ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN SOME INCONCLUSIVE INDICATION OF A GOM UNDERTAKING TO HELP SOMALIA. THE GOM COULD BE EXPECTED TO BE INFLUENCED BY THE SAUDIS ON THE QUESTION. ANOTHER FACTOR IS THAT BOTH MOROCCO AND SOMALIA LODGED RESERVATIONS AT CAIRO ON THE BASIC OAU RESOLUTION DECLARING INVIOABILITY OF COLONIAL FRONTIERS, AND MOROCCAN OFFICIALS CITE THIS AFFINITY WITH INCREASING FREQUENCY IN DISCUSSING EVENTS ON THE HORN. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE GOM HAS COME A LONG WAY IN A SHORT TIME, FOR MFA OFFICIALS AS RECENTLY AS FEB-MARCH TOLD EMBOFFS THAT THE GOM WAS ASSIDUOUSLY AVOIDING TAKING ANY POSITION ON THE HORN (RABAT 1051, 1554). CONFIDENTIAL

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6. THE STRONG SOMALI ENDORSEMENT OF THE GOM'S SAHARA POSITION AND THE CHARACTERIZED REVELATION OF SOMALIA'S MEDIATION ATTEMPT WILL BE WELCOMED HERE AND COULD BE THE QUID FOR SOME GOM MATERIAL GESTURE. HOWEVER, GIVEN THE RESERVE OF MANY OAU MEMBERS ON SOMALIA'S TERRITORIAL ASPIRATIONS WE WOULD BE SURPRISED TO SEE THE GOM GET OVERLY VISIBLE. AHDERSON

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